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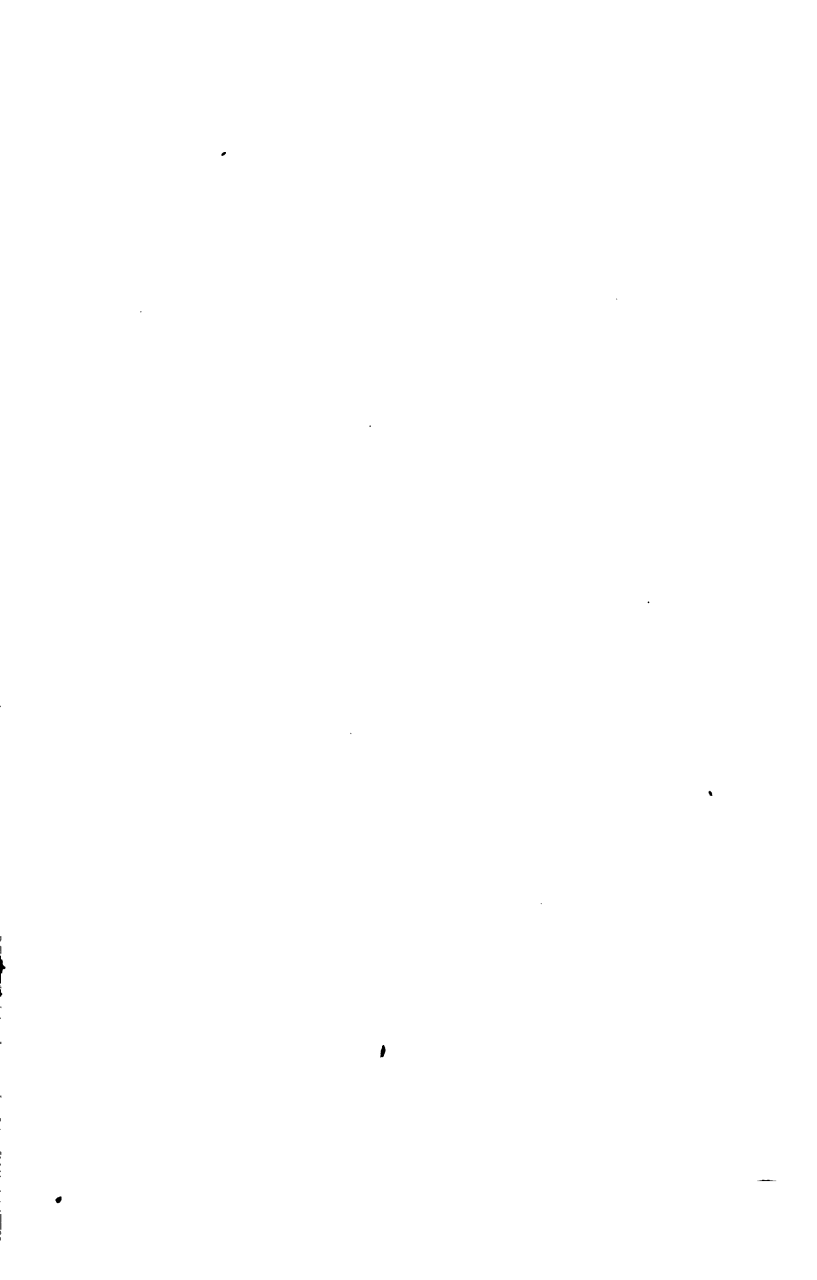
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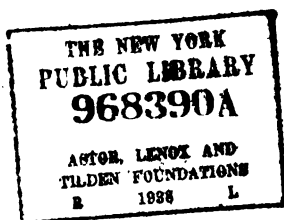
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G. D. L.





	PAGE
DAY-DREAMS	I
FLOWERTIME WEATHER	5
PAIN-WROUGHT	6
TO THE CICADA SEPTEMDECIM—SEVENTEEN YEAR	
LOCUST	7
LIFE	9
TO A ROSEBUD	10
THE MILKY WAY	12
HE AND SHE	15
THE STORM-KING	17
THE BEGGAR	21
THE DANCE	23
THE FOG	25
A DREAM OF HAPPINESS	27

	PAGE
OPPORTUNITY	28
THE SNOW-STORM	30
A MYSTERY	32
GOOD-BYE	35
PAIN	37
TO A HURT CHILD	40
COURAGE	42
"I CANNOT KNEEL—I CANNOT PRAY"	44
"MOTHER, MOTHER, CAN IT BE?"	46
THE SUNLIGHT	48
MY OTHER ME	50
THE POET-HEART	52
AN ENIGMA	55
"WEDDED, BUT NOT MATED"	56
IN LIFE'S TUNNEL	58
THE SONG OF THE CRICKET	59
IN THE HOSPITAL	61
SYMPATHY	72
MY LETTER	73
SWEET MOTHER OF MY DREAMS	75
LOVE NOW!	77
IN THE TEENS	79
LISTENING	81
MASTER SHADOW	83

CONTENTS.

ix

	PAGE
LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM	86
THE WAY TO BE HAPPY	88
THE GIFT OF SONG	90
TO A WOUNDED MOTH	92
SWINGING	94
RECOGNITION	96
THE SONG OF THE GOLDEN ROD	97
GOOD-NIGHT, MOTHER	99
REMEMBRANCE	101
MIDSUMMER	104
TO MY FATHER	106
MY FRIEND	107
IN MY WINDOW-SEAT	109



"MIMOSA LEAVES."





OH sweet are the dreams that darkness brings,—
The fragrant roses, that slumber flings
Into the garden of night ;
But sweeter far are the dreams that day
Drops all along life's weary way,
Like dew-drops on the buds of May,
To bless our waking sight.

Oh beautiful, beautiful dreams, that fall
Like tender moonlight, over all
The dreary wastes of life,
As if an angel went before,
And gilded all the landscape o'er
With the shadow of Heaven, where of yore
Was only pain and strife.

Oh beautiful dreams, that spring like flowers
Out of the seeds of life's dark hours,
 Watered with tears of pain ;
Flowers that bloom mid desert sands,
Too frail to transplant to brighter lands,
Too fair to be gathered by mortal hands,
 Too sweet to lose again.

Oh beautiful, beautiful, waking dreams,
That flow like forest-hidden streams
 By the foot-worn road of day ;
Streams that go singing for Love's own sake ;
Streams that their sweetest music make
Out of the very stones that break
 The smoothness of their way.

Oh exquisite dreams, that softly show
Through the grey-spun veil of earthly woe,
 Like a star in twilight skies,
Too far to make our own,—so near
It tempts our grasp,—that pure and clear,

On Night's dark cheek lies like a tear
Wept from an angel's eyes.

Oh dreams that rest on the life of youth
Like bubbles that rise in the well of truth
From the sombre depths below ;
Bubbles that catch each ray of the sun,
And mirror them upwards one by one,
Till all the well—so cold—so dun—
Gleams with a borrowed glow.

Oh stars that vanish, oh flowers that fade,
Oh streams that are lost in the woodland shade,
Oh bubbles that break with a kiss,
Oh dreams that from the buried roots
Of secret sorrows, like green shoots
Grow towards the light, yet bear no fruits,—
Are ye less fair for this?

What though ye are but dreams—but dreams?
Ah brighter our lives e'en for transient gleams

Of hopes that ne'er may be ours !
Then pray for a dreamless sleep if ye will,—
For a slumber no visions have power to thrill,—
But oh, thank God that he gives us still,
The dreams of our waking hours.





WHEN you and I are together,
That makes for me flowertime weather,
Albeit the rain
Beats harsh on the pane,
And November lies brown on the lea.

But alas for my flowertime weather
When we are no longer together !
Though June hold the land
In the palm of her hand,
It is everywhere Winter to me.



PAIN, Pain, the Creator Pain
Is making a poet of me.
He has flung my soul in the pit below
Where his furnace fires the fiercest glow.
He is feeding the flames with woe on woe.
My heart must thrill with every throe
That human creature can live to know.
I must suffer that I may sing.

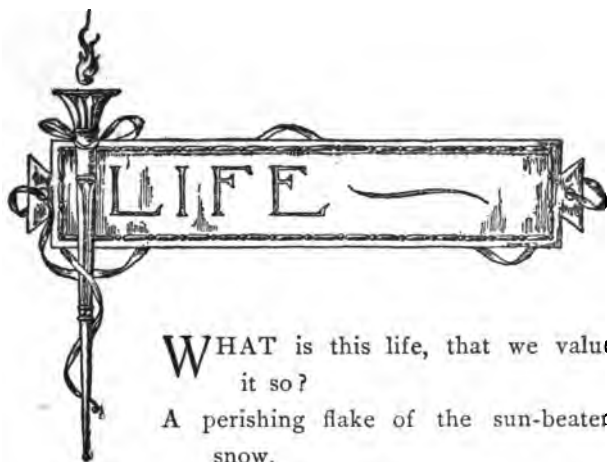
Pain, Pain, the Creator Pain
Is working his will with me.
Ashes and ruin and havoc complete
Has he wrought of all I held dear and sweet.
My soul lies scarred in the scorching heat.
My thoughts run riot with blazing feet,
Like madmen through a deserted street.
And because I suffer, I sing.



BURIED at moment of thy birth
 Beneath the earth ;
 Hid thy life long afar
 From glimpse of nearest star ;
Creeping in darkness while rich seasons roll,
Year following year, above thy stunted soul ;
Knowing but what the dead know in the tomb
 Of silence and of gloom,
Dead, thou too, in thy present and thy past,—
What call doth reach thy deafened ear at last ?
What instinct bids thee yearn towards the light—
 Thou, who hast known but night ?
What dream dawns in thee, beautiful and bold,

Of sylvan flight in noons of shimmering gold,
Where trembling trees their fluted leaves unfold ?
How should such radiant dream be thine ?
Or how canst thou divine
The counting of the years ?
For when their meted tale is told,
Lo, summoned straightway from the mould
By voice none other hears,—
Lo, born anew,
The dream thou could'st not dream, is true !
Thy sluggish spirit wakes, spreads wings away,
And knows the Day.

So, when God's time is done, may mystic call
On my dull senses fall.
So may I, groping upward through life's night,
Go forth, new-winged, to an undreamed-of light !



WHAT is this life, that we value
it so?

A perishing flake of the sun-beaten
snow.

An atom of dust on the wings of the wind.

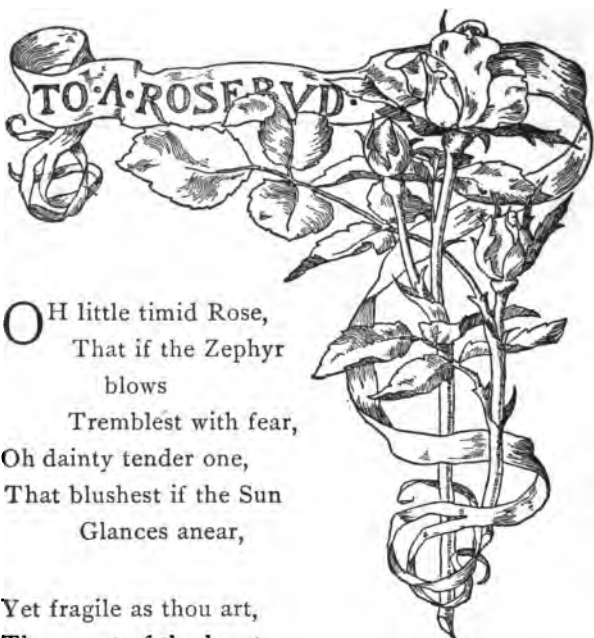
A vanishing thought in the heart of mankind.

Yet what is this life, that we question its power?

For the flake in dissolving, may water a flower,

The wind bear a seed to a desolate knoll,

And the thought, in its passing, have rescued a
soul.



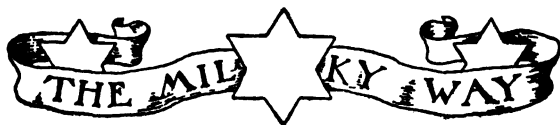
O H little timid Rose,
That if the Zephyr
blows
Tremblest with fear,
Oh dainty tender one,
That blushest if the Sun
Glances anear,

Yet fragile as thou art,
The secret of thy heart

Who thinks to win ?
Closer than bars of gold
Thy silken petals hold
The prize within.

And Winds in vain may blow,
And fiercest Sunbeams glow
 Above thy head ;
For when thy sweet heart lies
Open to eager eyes,—
 Lo, thou art dead !





EVENING has come ; and across the skies,—
Out through the darkness, that, quivering,
dies,—

Beautiful, broad, and white,
Fashioned of many a silver ray
Stolen out of the ruins of Day,
Grows the pale bridge of the Milky Way,
Built by the Architect Night.

Dim with shadows, and bright with stars,
Hung like gold lights on invisible bars
Stirred by the wind's low breath,
Rising on cloud-shapen pillars of grey,
Perfect it stands, like a tangible way
Binding to-morrow with Yesterday,
Reaching to Life from Death.

Dark show the Heavens on either side ;
Soft flows the Blue in a waveless tide
 Under the silver arch ;
Never a footstep is heard below,
Echoing earthward, as measured and slow,
Over the bridge the still hours go,
 Bound on their trackless march.

Is it a pathway leading to Heaven
Over Earth's sin-clouds, rent and riven
 With its supernal light,
Crossed by the souls of those who have flown
Stilly away from our arms, and alone
Up to the beautiful, great, white Throne
 Pass in the hush of night?

Is it the road that our wild dreams walk,
Far beyond reach of our waking talk,
 Out to the vague and grand,—
Far beyond Fancy's broadest range,
Out to the world of marvel and change,

Out to the mystic, unreal and strange,—
Out to the Wonderland ?

Is it the way that the angels take
When they come down by night to wake
Over the slumbering Earth ?
Is it the way the faint stars go back,
When the young Day drives them off from his
track
Into the distant mysterious Black
Where their bright souls had birth ?

What may it be ? Who may certainly say ?
Over the shadowy Milky Way
No human foot hath trod.
Ages have passed ; but unsullied and white,
Still it stands, fair as a rainbow of night,
Held like a promise above our dark sight,
Guiding our thoughts to God.



HE stood with his hand on the mane of his steed,
All booted and spurred. Oh a true knight
indeed,—

A gallant young knight was he !
And she stood, fair and slender, all lily-white
drest,
So near, ah so near, reaching up to his breast
As a rose on his heart laid she.

The morning sun glistened o'er woodland and dell,
And tenderly, wistfully, lovingly fell
O'er the twain by the dewy green lea,

Kissed a light to her eyes and a bloom to her
cheek,
And a thought to his heart that he dared not
speak,
Though so close by her side stood he !

On his breast the sweet rosebud blushed redder
for shame.
On her cheek the pale color now went and now
came.

Was any one near to see ?
For between their two hearts, like a visible word,
Lay an unspoken Love. Oh, had any one heard ?
No. No one but he and she.





The Storm-king.

STAND back ! Stand back
From my giant track !
Sweep the grey dust from the way !
See the pale grass bend !
See the great trees rend !
Hurrah ! I am Lord of the day !
I am Master and King
Over everything—
I am Monarch, and Earth must obey !

Weave me a gown
Of yon cloud's black frown,
Which shall keep me warm as I go.

Pluck me a whip
From the spars of yon ship
And a staff from that forest below.
And this tall church-spire
Is the tip I desire
For the arrow I set in my bow.

I am King ! I am King !
The whole world shall ring
My mad coronation bell !
Cities are shaking.
Men's hearts are quaking.
I will govern, oh strong and well !
I am coming ! I come !
Beat, beat the drum !
Let the echoes my advent tell !

Hurrah, oh hurrah !
Beneath moon and star
How will I revel at night !


I will build me a fire
Where hills stand higher,
And scream and exult in its light,
And write out my name,
In red letters of flame,
In cowering mortals' sight.

I hiss and I mutter,
And none knows if I utter
Or blessing, or curse, or prayer.
None knows what I speak ;
Though I storm and I shriek,
None interprets the message I bear.
I rave and I rage,
And Earth's wisest sage
Hears no more than the brute in his lair !

I am King ! I am King !
And to me one thing
Is beggar, or courtier, or pope.

I thread into rags
The proudest of flags,
Or the end of the hangman's rope.
I scoff in lords' faces.
I jeer in high places.
I shout on the graveyard's slope.

Oh delight ! Oh joy !
The world is my toy !
Hurrah ! I am Lord of the day !
I rule all alone
On my self-raised throne,
And none may dispute my sway !
Then stand back ! Stand back !
Sweep the dust from my track !
I am Monarch, and Earth must obey !



The Beggar—

ALL day, all the day, in the dust,
in the heat,
With maddening brain and with staggering feet,
I stand on Life's highway, and beg
my soul's meat.

All day, all the day, in the cold, in the rain,
Through days that are vapid and timeless with pain,
I stretch out my hand to the rich—and in vain.

Oh my soul is a-hungered—my soul is athirst !
It cries out to mortals as one God-accurst,
Abandoned of Heaven, when life is at worst.

Say, say, is there any 'neath Heaven's blue sky
So beggared of faith, hope and courage as I?
Give, give, oh my brothers! Give, give, or I die!

Shall I famish and faint in the midst of Life's
mart,
And ye who seem pitiful, spare not a part
Of your souls' garnered wealth for one needy poor
heart?

In vain! Ye fling alms to the rags that ye meet;
But souls that lie naked and starved at your feet,
These cry out unheard, and must die on the street.





LET the music play !
I would dance away—
Dance till the dawn of the bright
young day !

Wild notes are sounding—swift lights are glancing,
And I—I am mad with the rapture of dancing—
Mad with a breathless delight.
With thine arm to enfold me,
Thy strong hand to hold me,
I could dance through an endless night.

Doth the music play ?
Or is it—oh say—
But the sound of thy voice that I hear for alway ?

Is it thy smile or the sweet lights glancing?

Is it thy presence or only the dancing

Makes the whole world so glad?

Love I—ah me!

Or the dance, or thee?

Am I mad? Am I mad? Am I mad?

Bid the music play!

Let us dance alway—

Through all life—through all time—dance forever
and aye!

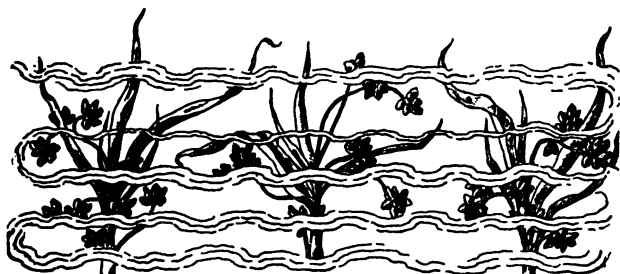
Such wild notes are sounding! Such bright lights
are glancing!

And I—I am mad with the madness of dancing,—
Of dancing?—or dancing with thee?

In thy true love enfold me!

With thy strong heart uphold me!

Let us dance till earth ceases to be!



THE FOG

It lies dim and cold on the
face of the mould,
Like a smile on the lips of
the dead.

As chill and as white, as dense
and as light

As the winding-sheet laid in
the still of the night
Over the funeral bed.

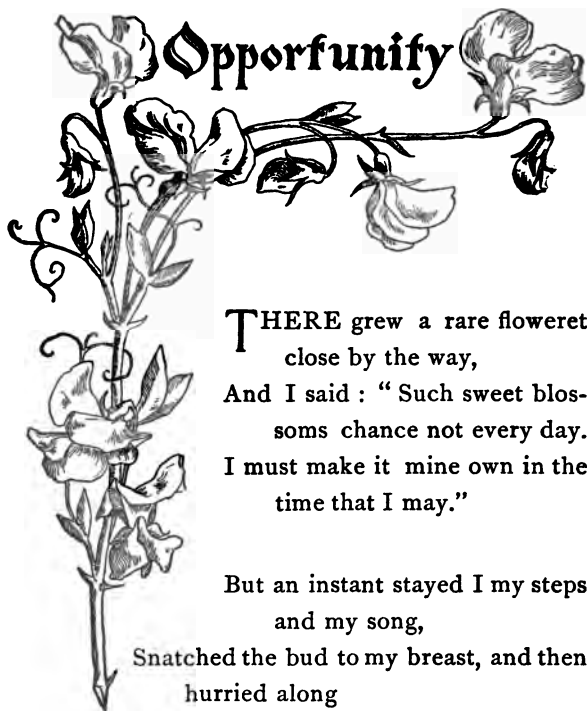
No pulse seems to throb, no voice dares to sob
 Beneath the grey calm of the cloud.
A Hush holds the air with pale bands of despair,
Too close to be pierced by a curse or a prayer,—
 The hush of a soul in its shroud.

No stars in the sky ; no lights low or high ;
 No laughter ; no weeping ; no breath ;
No murmur, no sound in the whole world around,
But a Silence that lies blank and chill on the ground,
 Like the visible presence of Death.

No murmur. No sound. Only white on the ground
 There creeps a thin Silence along,—
Creeps near and more near,—oh so dim ! oh so
 drear !
Till I shiver, as one who has stood by a bier,
 And the words die away in my song.



ONE sat and modelled a most perfect face ;
And they who passed him, marvelling at its
 grace,
Vowed never mortal breathed so blest as he
Whose soul held dream of such divinity.
He, as he wrought, cursed God.—This was his
 fate ;
Conceiving Heaven, he lived without its gate.



Opportunity

THERE grew a rare floweret
close by the way,
And I said : " Such sweet blos-
soms chance not every day.
I must make it mine own in the
time that I may."

But an instant stayed I my steps
and my song,
Snatched the bud to my breast, and then
hurried along
To be foremost and first in the rush of
the throng.

The day it was long, and was dusty and hot ;
But ambition compelled, and I rested me not ;
And the flower that bloomed on my breast—I
forgot.

But when even came, weary and spent and foot-
sore,
When the dew laid the dust, and the day's toil was
o'er,
Then I thought of the blossom I gathered before.

And I said : " Surely now at the last I may rest,
And take joy in the end from Earth's sweetest and
best."

And my hand sought the bud where it lay on my
breast.

" All day hath it bloomed unregarded," I said,
" But now shall it cheer me when daylight hath
fled."

Oh too tardy remembrance ! My flower was dead.



LIGHTLY and whitely
As wheat from the grain,
Thickly and quickly
As thoughts through the brain,
So fast and so dumb,
So the snowflakes come ;
Swift, swift as the lays drop
From glad poet-lips ;
Soft, soft as the days drop
From Time's finger-tips.
Oh a-many, a-many !
Yet no sound from any.

Oh so fast, oh so fast !
Yet no track where they passed.
Oh so fragile, so frail !
Yet no force can prevail
To speed them or stay them.
No prayer can outweigh them.
They fall where they must
 Through the fathomless grey,
And bring to Earth's dust,
 What of Heaven they may.





LIFE held in her hands a measure,
And swung it lightly and low ;
And she said : I will see if my pleasure
Do not outweigh my woe.
And she gathered all stingless laughter,
All loves that were lasting and sure,
All joys that left memories after,
All wealth that was wingless and pure ;
She gathered all sunlight and starlight,
All thornless and fadeless flowers ;
She gathered the faint light and far light
Of pangless and perfect hours ;
She gathered all glimpses elysian
That never had blasted the soul,
All hopes that had held to fruition,

All talents that won to the goal,
All wisdom that never had saddened,
All truths that never had lied,
All ambitions that never had maddened,
All beauty that satisfied.
And she flung them all, all in her measure,
But they nothing outbalanced the pain ;
And she said : I must add yet a treasure,
The kindest and best in my train.
And she reached out and took Death, and laid it
All restful and calm on the scale ;
Yet pain, as before, still outweighed it,
And she sighed as she said : Could this fail ?
Then she reached up to merciful Heaven,
Took down and flung over Earth's strife,
A little pale hope all unproven,—
The hope of a measureless life ;
Flung it down with a doubting and wonder,
With question and touch of disdain ;
When lo, swift the light scale went under ;—
Life's woe was outweighed by Life's gain.

Oh strange, oh most strange ! If the measure
Of all mortal days be but woe
Compared with their acme of pleasure,
Life mused, as she swung the scale low,
Why then should it lessen Earth's sorrow,
Why magnify Death's consequence,
To believe in a timeless to-morrow ?
And Life held the scale in suspense.





WE say it for an hour or for years ;
We say it smiling, say it choked with tears ;
We say it coldly, say it with a kiss ;
And yet we have none other word than this,—
Good-bye.

We have no dearer word for our heart's friend.
To him who journeys to the world's far end
And scars our soul with going, thus we say
As unto him who but steps o'er the way,—
Good-bye.

Alike to those we love and those we hate,
We say no more in parting. At life's gate,
To one who passes out beyond Earth's sight,
We cry as to the wanderer for a night,
Good-bye.





I AM a Mystery that walks the Earth
Since man began to be.
Sorrow and Sin stood sponsors at my birth,
And Terror christened me.

More pitiless than Death, who gathereth
His victims day by day,
I doom man daily to desire Death,
And still forbear to slay.

More merciless than Time, I leave man Youth,
And suck life's sweetness out.
More cruel than Despair, I show man Truth,
And leave him strength to doubt.

I bind the freest in my subtle band.

I blanche the boldest cheek.

I hold the hearts of poets in my hand,
And wring them ere they speak.

I walk in darkness over souls that bleed.

I shape each as I go

To something different. I sow the seed
Whence grapes or thistles grow.

No two that dream me, dream the self-same face.

No two name me alike.

A Horror without form I fill all space.
Across all time I strike.

Look how man cringes to mine unseen rod !

Kings own my sovereignty.

Though seers but prove me as they prove a God,
Yet none denieth me.

I come ! I come ! Life's monster Mystery,

I come, to bless or damn.

**Kneel, kneel, vain soul ! Helpless, acknowledge
me !**

Thou *feelest* that *I am* !





WHAT, are you hurt, Sweet ? So am I ;
Cut to the heart ;
Though I may neither moan nor cry,
To ease the smart.

Where was it, Love ? Just here ! So wide
Upon your cheek !
Oh happy pain that needs no pride,
And may dare speak.

Lay here your pretty head. One touch
Will heal its worst.

TO A HURT CHILD.

While I, whose wound bleeds overmuch,
Go all unnursed.

There, Sweet. Run back now to your play.
Forget your woes.
I too was sorely hurt this day ;—
But no one knows.





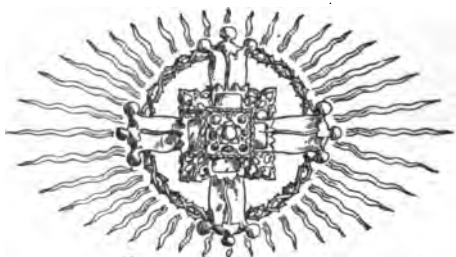
HAST thou made shipwreck of thy happiness ?
Yet, if God please,
Thou 'lt find thee some small haven none the less,
In nearer seas,
Where thou mayst sleep for utter weariness,
If not for ease.

The port thou dreamed'st of thou shalt never reach,
Though gold its gates,
And wide and fair the silver of its beach.

For sorrow waits
To pilot all whose aims too far outreach,
Towards darker straits.

Yet so no soul divine thou art astray,
On this cliff's crown
Plant thou a victor flag ere breaks the day
Across night's brown,
And none shall guess it doth but point the way
Where a bark went down.





I can not kneel— I can not pray.

I CAN not kneel—I can not pray—
My dumb heart has no words to say.
My stubborn knees refuse to bend.
They kneel who pray, and to what end
Should I kneel, who can make no prayer
Out of my agonized despair?
My sorrow lies beyond the reach
Of any form of human speech.
God is so great, and I so weak;
How can so hurt a creature speak?

How move Him to undo the woe?—
Calm with the vastness of the blow,
I can but gaze with stricken eyes
Out into His imperial skies,
Drop my vain hands upon my breast,
And feel what God will *must* be best.





MOTHER, Mother, can it be
There lives any besides me
Who has known this agony?

Mother, oh Mother, when they said
That thy sweetest soul had fled,
It was I who died instead.

Thee they laid away to sleep
Out of sight of all who weep.
Me unburied still they keep.

Who will show them I am dead ?
Who will ask that o'er my head
Moan be made and prayers be said ?

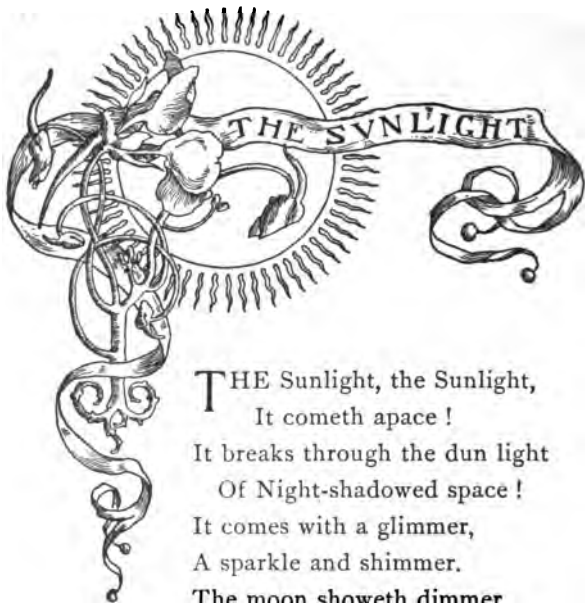
I am more dead than thou art.
Love lies spoiling at my heart.
Who dares keep us twain apart ?

Dead, I know no more men's faith.
Dead, I hear not what God saith.
I am no more but a wraith.

Restless, ghost-like, to and fro,
Haunting thy dear home below,
Speechless day by day I go ;

Conscious only of a pain
Rends my very soul in twain,
Robs me of Heaven and makes Earth vain.

For Mother, Mother, thou art where ?
Art not here, and art not there.
And seeking, I but find—despair.



THE Sunlight, the Sunlight,
It cometh apace !
It breaks through the dun light
Of Night-shadowed space !
It comes with a glimmer,
A sparkle and shimmer.
The moon showeth dimmer,
The planets give place !

It bendeth, it rendeth
Night's prisoning bars !
Exultant out-sendeth
Its voiceless hurrahs !

O'er bulwarks and bowers
It scatters bright showers,
Like luminous flowers
Grown out of the stars !

Oh souls that lie sleeping
In doubt and in night,
Wake, wake from your weeping !
Day comes, in despite
Of cavil or grieving.
Man's best of Believing,
Is but the receiving
Of Heavenly Light.





CHILDREN, do you ever
In walks by land or sea,
Meet a little maiden
Long time lost to me ?

She is gay and gladsome,
Has a laughing face,
And a heart as sunny ;
And her name is Grace.

Naught she knows of sorrow,
Naught of doubt or blight.

Heaven is just above her.
All her thoughts are white.

Long time since I lost her,
That other Me of mine.
She crossed into Time's shadow,
Out of Youth's sunshine.

Now the darkness keeps her,
And call her as I will,
The years that lie between us,
Hide her from me still.

I am dull and pain-worn,
And lonely as can be.
Oh children, if you meet her,
Send back my other Me !



The Poet Heart

ONE day, in Time's sunniest ages,
Fair Life, and her servant Pain,
Her workman, who works without wages,
And wiser who is than all sages
That follow the stars in her train,

Together, in friendliest fashion
Sat framing a poet-heart ;
And with infinite care and compassion,
Life chose out each charm and each passion,
And blent them with marvellous art.

Fairer, she cried, than Earth's fairest,
This lovely spirit shall be,

Enriched with all gifts that are rarest.
See to it no power thou sparest
In moulding my poet for me.

Here are days that are golden and sunny,
And a heart made to gather their light,
And hold it as purses hold money,—
To hold it as flowers hold honey,
And tremble and thrill with delight.

Take, take, without stint, without measure,
Of all that I have that is best ;
Of beauty, of love and of pleasure
Take richly, and make at thy leisure
A poet to sing me to rest.

And so from her full store of graces,
Fair Life, with a smile, gave the whole,
While Pain, with the stillest of faces,
And fingers whose touch left no traces,
Wrought her of these a soul.

Then he stood up and said : It is ended,
And held forth his soul to the light,—
A wondrous creation, where blended
Strange shadows, and sunlight so splendid
It darkened all else to the sight.

Life took and beheld it in gladness.
Such, cried she, true poets should be,—
All ecstasy, rapture and sadness,
Created in moments of madness,
And fashioned, oh Pain, by thee.

This, sure, is thy ripest endeavor,
Cried Life, smiling soft as she spoke.
Now poet-heart, sing on forever !
But alas ! Earth will hear its song never.
Pain touched it once more.—And it broke.



AN ENIGMA

TO have not, is to long for with desire.

To have, is but to lose.

To lose, is to remember and expire.

How may one rightly choose?

Between a want, a loss, a lifelong pain,

What, saving death, hath any soul of gain?



WEDDING bells and death-knells
 Ringing forth together.
(Shines the sun ? or is it dun ?
 Or is it stormy weather ?)
Oh woe the knells ! oh joy the bells
 That sob and shout in chime !
They bid to a marriage and funeral carriage
 At one and the self-same time.

Wedding bells and death-knells
 Ringing forth together.
(Be there sun or be there none,
 What care I for the weather ?)

They toll, they toll, for a tortured soul.
They call to a marriage feast.
One shall be wedded, one be buried,
And both by the self-same priest.

Wedding bells and death-knells
Ringing forth together.
(Falls the rain upon the pane ?
'T is time for saddest weather !)
Funeral knells and marriage bells.
A shroud and a wedding ring.
A soul is wed. A soul is dead.
The bells have ceased to swing.

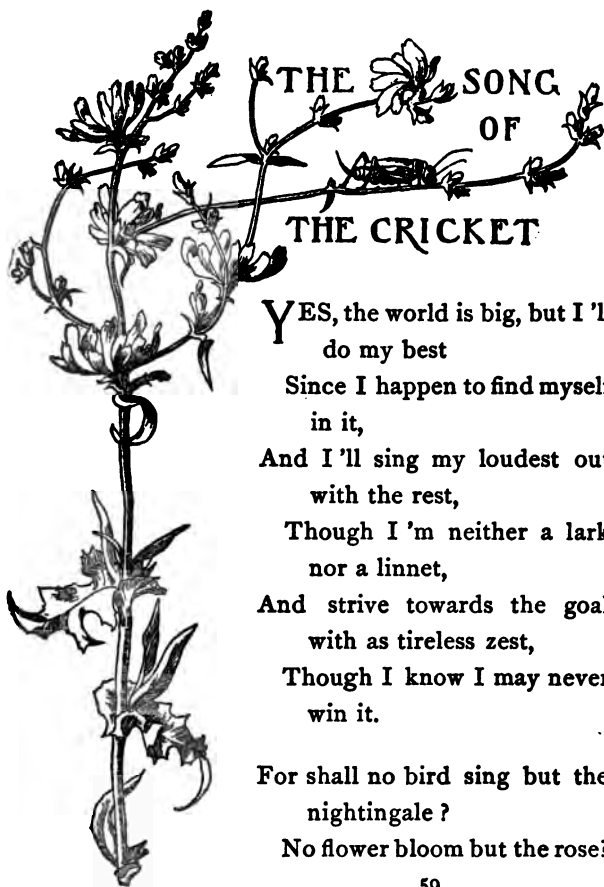




BORNE by a Power resistless and unseen
We know not whither,
We look out through the gloom with troubled mien.
How came we hither ?

Darkness before and after. Blank, dim walls
On either side,
Against which our dull vision beats and falls,
Met and defied.

Shrouded in mystery that leaves no room
To guess aright,
We rush, uncertain, to a certain doom.—
When lo, the light !



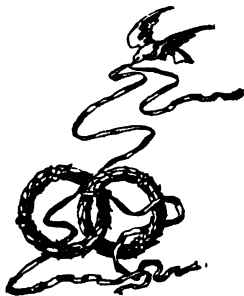
THE SONG
OF
THE CRICKET

YES, the world is big, but I 'll
do my best
Since I happen to find myself
in it,
And I 'll sing my loudest out
with the rest,
Though I 'm neither a lark
nor a linnet,
And strive towards the goal
with as tireless zest,
Though I know I may never
win it.

For shall no bird sing but the
nightingale ?
No flower bloom but the rose?

Shall lesser stars quench their torches pale
When Mars through the midnight glows ?
Shall only the highest and greatest prevail ?
May nothing seem white but the snows ?

Nay, the world is so big that it needs us all
To make audible music in it.
God fits a melody e'en to the small.
We have nothing to do but begin it.
So I 'll chirp my merriest out with them all,
Though I 'm neither a lark nor a linnet !





I.

GRIMED with misery, want, and sin,
From a drunken brawl they brought him in,

While tearless-eyed around his bed,
They whispered coldly : He is dead,

And looked askance as they went past,
And said : Best so. He has sinned his last.

But the Doctor came and declared : Not so.
A fragment of life yet lies aglow.

And day and night beside the bed,
He bent his skilful, earnest head ;

By night, by day, with toil, with pain,
Coaxed back the worthless life again ;

Coaxed back the life so nearly told,
And the man returned to his ways of old,—

Returned unchanged to his old, sad ways,
And sinned and sinned to the end of his days.

And the Doctor wrote in his private book :
Sin, Sorrow, Wrong, where'er I look.

I have saved a hideous life. And why ?
That a man curse God again, and die.

II.

The mother smiled through her wretchedness,
For the new-born babe lay motionless.

And the nurses looked at her ringless hand.
Best dead, they said. We understand.

But the Doctor came and declared : Not so.
A fragment of life yet lies aglow.

And wrestling close and long with Death,
He brought again the faltering breath,

And gave the poor unwelcome life
Back to the mother who was not wife.

And she took it with loathing and bore off in shame
The babe for whom Earth had no place when it
came.

And the Doctor wrote in his private book :
Sin, Sorrow, Wrong, where'er I look.

I have saved a needless life. And why ?
That a babe risk Heaven ere it die.

III.

With pitying hands and gentle feet,
They bore in a child struck down on the street,

Mangled and bruised in every limb,
With brow snow-cold and blue eyes dim.

And they kissed the silk hair on his golden head,
And sobbed : Thank God, the sweet child is dead.

But the Doctor came and declared : Not so.
A fragment of life yet lies aglow.

And day and night, beside the bed,
He bent his skilful, earnest head,

With patience, care, and tireless pain,
Won back the broken life again ;

Won it back from the brink of Death's calm river,
To struggle, and sicken, and suffer forever ;

Won it back from the merciful shores of the dead,
To lie through slow years on a terrible bed.

And the Doctor wrote in his private book :
Sin, Sorrow, Wrong, where'er I look.

I have saved a sorrowful life. And why ?
That a child taste of Hell ere men let him die.

And the Doctor closed his book, and said :
Three live by me who best were dead.

BEYOND THE HOSPITAL.

THE Doctor's work was done. He lay
Upon his death-bed, old and gray,

With the look on his face as of one who has wept,
And has labored and watched while his fellows
have slept.

And he folded his hands on his weary breast,
And murmured : Come, Death. I am ready for
rest.

God judge of me lightly. I did what I could,
And yet have wrought evil in striving for good.

And swiftly, lo, all space was riven
To where the Angels stood in Heaven.

And he heard one say : A wise man dies.
Is it time I went down and closed his eyes ?

Not yet, they said. 'T is in his book :
Sin, Sorrow, Wrong, where'er I look.

Is he ready for Heaven who needs to learn first,
God's hand brings a blessing e'en out of life's
worst ?

Not yet, said they. This wise man said :
Three live by me who best were dead.

Is he ready for death, knowing not what life
meant,
That no being lives but to some good intent ?

And the Angels stood beside his bed.
Unlearn Earth's falsehoods, friend, they said.

And the Doctor uplifted his questioning gaze,
And saw through the world and its innermost ways,

Where grovelled a mortal, close wrapped in his sin,
Degraded without and degraded within.

God forgive ! groaned the Doctor. I am the cause
Yon creature yet liveth to transgress Thy laws.

Speak soft, said the Angels. How mayest *thou* tell
What moment of sinning condemns him to Hell ?

Or how knowest thou but some late day of grace
May find, e'en for him, in high Heaven a place ?

Leave God to adjudge him. Thou seest in part ;
Thou look'st at the life ; God looks at the heart.

Oh pity him, help him ! but dare not to say
It were better to shorten his life by a day ;

For as red flags of danger warn off from the road,
So yon erring soul hath led many to God.

The Doctor smiled softly : I understand.
God holds, e'en for sinners, some work in His hand.

And he turned his wondering eyes away
To where a cradled infant lay,

While the mother hung o'er it with love and with
shame,
For she gave it a life, but could give it no name.

God forgive ! cried the Doctor. The babe but for
me,
Had been spared all knowledge of Earth's infamy.

Speak soft, said the Angels. That babe is the link
To draw her soul back from destruction's brink.

There is nobler work given those puny hands,
Than falls to the lot of the Angel bands.

Oh pity it, shield it ! but dare not to say
It were better to shorten its life by a day :

For sweeter is Rest, won through danger and toil :
And purer is Purity treasured through soil.

The Doctor smiled softly : The longer our strife,
The nobler is winning the heavenly life.

And he turned his tear-dim eyes away
To where a child complaining lay,

Struggling and spent with incurable pain,
While Death stood aloof, and science was vain.

God forgive ! moaned the Doctor. The child, but
for me,
Had never awakened to life's cruelty.

Speak soft, said the Angels. How mayest thou
know
What beautiful growth comes to Earth of his woe ?

Oh pity him, love him ! but dare not to say
It were better to shorten his life by a day :

For like flowers that spring but on sunless knolls,
Some graces bloom only in tortured souls.

And a hundred hearts, all for the sake of that one,
Are learning the beauty of duties done ;

Are learning unselfishness, thoughtfulness, care,
By the side of that pain which they may not share.

And the sufferer—Heaven deserteth such not ;
God's arm is around him ; envy his lot.

Amen ! said the Doctor. God stoops to the weak.
'T is they who are strongest have farthest to seek.

Oh, blessèd all lives, since for each God hath use,
Despite of sin, sorrow, and wrong, and abuse !

I thank Thee, I thank Thee, O God, that those
three
Whose lives I deplored are yet living by me.

Then low spoke the Angels : Now tell it in Heaven
A glad soul the more to our fair Realm is given.

And the sunlight fell soft as God's kiss on his head,
And men stooped o'er him weeping, and said : He
is dead.

But his lips wore a smile of supremest content
And of infinite calm. For he knew what Life
meant.



Sympathy—



FRIEND, art thou drown-
ing? So am I.

Hold by my hand.
Nearer is my vain help, than help
From yonder land.

Friend, art thou starving? So,
too, I.

Therefore I come
To thee—not to the over-fed—
To ask a crumb.

Friend, hast thou nothing? Less have I.
Yet beggared ones
Give more to those who beg than e'er
Earth's richest sons.

My ~ Letter

FROM far away, from far away,
It journeyed swiftly night and day.
It rested not. With cruel haste
It crossed the ocean's trackless waste.
It swerved no moment in its flight
Through mist and storm and deepest night.
No mercy prompted it to stay,
No pity moved it to delay.
O'er seas that rose up to detain,
Silent as Death it sped amain.
Through cities crowding close and strong,
Undazed, untired, it fled along.
No voice cried out through all the land.
Great Heaven saw, yet stirred no hand.
No angel, kinder than the rest,
Held his white shield before my breast.

Across the land, across the sea,
Straight, swift, and sure, it came to me !
Unlet, unhindered, undeterred,
Straight, swift and sure, it brought me word !



**SWEET
MOTHER**



**OF MY
DREAMS**

SWEET Mother of my dreams,
Come, come to-night !
How can I meet an added morrow,
Till thou bring solace to my sorrow,
Cleaving life's pain
By night in twain ?

Sweet Mother of my dreams,
Bring love ! Bring peace !
As day is death by loss of thee,
So night is life by gift of thee,
Albeit I waken,
Twofold forsaken.

76 *SWEET MOTHER OF MY DREAMS.*

Sweet Mother of my dreams,
 Thank God for thee !
Not all Christ's mercy is forsworn,
While I, sometimes, twixt dusk and morn,
 Still touch thy hand,
 In slumber-land.





YOU will love me the day I lie dying.
Oh love me then living,
While yet from a full heart replying,
I give to your giving. /

What gain hath my lifetime of loving,
If you pass it all by,
To give me back treble my loving
In the hour I die ?

All anguish, all maddest adoring
Will be vain in that day.
Though you knelt to me then with imploring,
What word could I say ?

Oh love me then now, that it quicken
My heart's failing breath !
Why wait, till to love is to sicken
At the coldness of death ?





BUTTERFLIES, and treasure
Of buds that crowd the green ;
Sunshine without measure ;
Silvern days of leisure ;
Hearts too full of pleasure ;—
April—and Thirteen.

Books and half beginnings ;
Rains, with lights between ;
Pangs o'er fancied sinnings ;
Toils, with rose-leaved innings ;
Losses matched with winnings ;—
Maytime—and Sixteen.

Dreams, with dim regrettings ;
Storms and blinding sheen ;
Gains, with griefs for frettings ;
Jewels, in crushed settings ;
Wounds, salved with forgettings ;—
June—July—Nineteen !





I LISTEN and I listen
For one I long to greet,
And I hear the ceaseless passing
Of footsteps on the street.

I hear them coming, coming,—
So straight, so sure, so fast ;
And I hush my heart to hearken.
But all the feet go past.

Will it be so forever ?
As on my bed I lie,
Counting the pleasures coming,
Will every one go by ?

Or may it one day happen,
That when I hark no more,
Some late lone joy, unnoticed,
Will linger at my door ?





I 'M afraid of my shadow, it goes such a pace,
As if to rush forward and look in my face
If I turn the least bit ; or when for a space
I take pains not to move,
Then that queer thing above
That is me, yet not me, grows so big on the wall,
That I draw in my breath and don't like it at all.
What is it? And why should it watch me by night?
Perhaps it 's the ghost of that me-by-daylight
That I ran such a race with over the tan,
And could n't outrun, though I raced like a man.
It has followed me in from my play
Right out of the heat of the day,
And is cooling and cooling away

To be ripe and ready for fun
With the dawn of to-morrow's sun.
Oh my shadow and I, in the brilliant daylight,
We are very close friends,—but I hate him by
night !

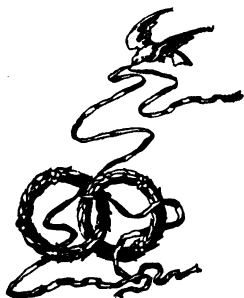
I can't sleep a wink,
It is so odd to think
That I am down here in my snug little bed
All the time I'm up there, too, above my own
head.

It 's excessively queer,
And not very clear,
If I am my shadow, or my shadow is me.
But what makes it shake so? Perhaps—can
it be,

That my shadow is really as frightened of me
As I am of it ?

Then why does it sit
In this room where I am ? It need n't to stay.
I shall not feel ready for frolic till day,
And it 's perfectly welcome to go quite away

Downstairs to the rest,
And indeed—'t would be best.
Oh some one, do come ! Do put out the light !
He 's gone ! Oh, I 'm glad. Master Shadow,
good-night.





VAGUE as the shadows neath April-leaved trees,
Is Love's young Dream.

Light as a thistledown tossed on the breeze,
Is Love's young Dream.

Frail as a fibre of frost-woven lace—

Dim as the thought of a phantom face—

Faint as the footprints of planets through space,
Is Love's young Dream.

Oh brilliant and cold as the moon on the snow,
Is Love's young Dream !

Oh pulseless in bliss and unwounded in woe,
Is Love's young Dream !

Shallow as brooklets that laugh as they run,
And soulless as starlight when dawn is begun !
Oh unlike to Love as glowworm to sun,
Is Love's young Dream !





NEVER to want what one may not have,—
Always to want what one may.

Never to long for the love that is lost,
Nor by night to remember the day.

To be fonder of Winter than Summer or Spring.
To be fonder of leaves than of flowers.
To be fonder of toil than of riches and rest,
And of pain than of pleasurable hours.

To demand nothing more of the heart one loves best,
Than the least one would grant to one's foe.

To ask no return for the gift of one's all,
Save the loan of a heartache or so.

To believe there is purpose and beauty in woe.

To believe that to fail is to win.

To stand in Hope's graveyard alone, and prefer
The Now to the What-might-have-been.





WHEN I was born
God stood in Heaven, and asked : What
wilt thou, Soul ?
I said : The Gift of Song ;
I ask no more than this — that I may sing.
God sighed, and lo, Grief fell
From out high Heaven and smote me on the heart.
I cried aloud for pain, and beat my breast.
But all my cries were music, and men list,
And feasted on the sweetness of my woe.
While I, I hid my face,
And knew not day from night for agony.
Oh God, I cried, take back thy poisoned gift,
The gift of Song !
Let me be dumb forever, only so
My pain have ease !

Then God did hear again, and stooped Him down
And drew the burning arrow from my side ;
And silence fell on me ; my pulse stood still,
My lips closed softly, and I sang no more.
But men turned from me, saying : He is dead.





WHAT help have I for thee, frail thing,
Least of thy clan,
Battling 'gainst fate with bruised wing?
Albeit I hold thee in my hand,
Farther am I from thee than stand
The stars from man.

Dost thou cry out? Dost thou make moan?
I hear thee not.
Thy worst pain thou must bear alone.
The utmost pity on my part
Can drop no balsam to thy heart.
It is thy lot.

And yet, more merciful to thee
 Than Heaven to us
Through year-long plaint of agony,—
More kind than He, of whom in vain,
Kneeling, we beg surcease of pain,
 I kill thee—thus.





HIGHER, higher, farther away,
Swing me—swing me—swing me !
Up to the tree-top, up to the sky,
So that none other has swung so high !
I will out-fly the bees and the birds and the winds.
I will out-soar the song of the lark.
I will reach to the clouds. I will shout in blue space.
I will laugh in the shadowy silver face
Of the moon, as she sits in the dark !
Oh higher, oh higher, oh farther away,
Swing me—swing me—swing me !
See how I cleave the dim air in my flight,
Like a dart from an unseen bow.

See how I leap through the gloom of the night,
Like a vision of sudden and sweetest delight

Shot through a lifetime of woe !

Upward, upward, upward always,
Like a spirit set free from its prison of clay,
That speeds through the ether away and away

To a world that none else of us know !

Oh higher, oh higher, oh farther away

Swing me—swing me—swing me.

No higher ? No higher ? No higher ?

Oh swing me—swing me—swing me !

Can I stop so far short of my nearest desire ?

Is it so childish, so vain, to aspire ?

Oh swing me, and swing me, and swing me !

I would soar far above me. Oh help if you love me !

Oh lend me the charm of love's powerful arm !

Nay, faster and faster ! Oh farther, I pray !

Can the dream end so soon ? I was more than
half-way.

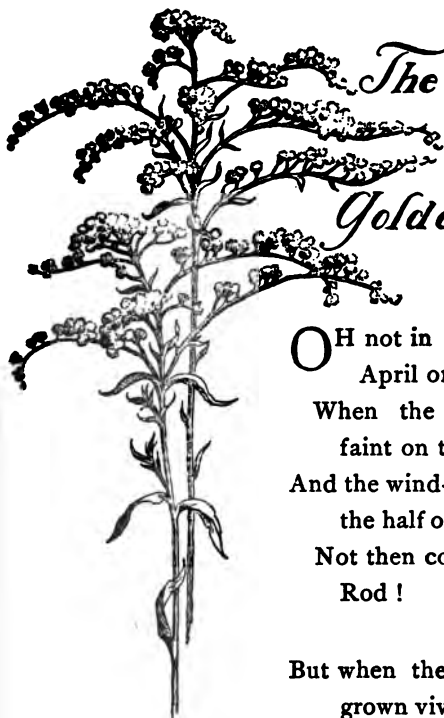
Oh swing me ! Oh swing me ! Oh swing me !



AS erst with thee, oh Psyche, so me-seems
My wandering hands touched Love once
in my dreams.

Asleep he lay. Around us drooped the night.
No gracious starbeam lent revealing light.
I saw his form not, nor his matchless grace.

And yet, unlike to thee,
Need was not I should look him in the face.
By that one touch, all in a moment's space,
I knew him for a God !



*The Song of
the
Golden-rod*

O H not in the morning of
April or May,
When the young light lies
faint on the sod
And the wind-flower blooms for
the half of a day,—
Not then comes the Golden-
Rod !

But when the bright year has
grown vivid and bold
With its utmost of beauty and strength,
Then it leaps into life, and its banners unfold
Along all the land's green length.

98 *THE SONG OF THE GOLDEN-ROD.*

It is born in the glow of a great high noon.

It is wrought of a bit of the sun.

Its being is set to a golden tune

In a golden summer begun.

No cliff is too high for its resolute foot,

No meadow too bare or too low.

It asks but the space for its fearless root,

And the right to be glad and to grow.

It delights in the loneliest waste of the moor,

And mocks at the rain and the gust.

It belongs to the people. It blooms for the poor.

It thrives in the roadside dust.

It endures though September wax chill and unkind.

It laughs on the brink of the crag,

Nor blanches when forests turn white in the wind.

Though dying, it holds up its flag !

Its bloom knows no stint—its gold no alloy,

And we claim it forever as ours,—

God's symbol of Freedom and world-wide Joy—

America's flower of flowers !



GOOD-NIGHT, Mother. Thou dost sleep,
While my lonely watch I keep.
Suns blaze brightly overhead ;
Moons pass by with silver tread ;
Night and day, and day and night
Alternate with shade and light.
But I know no change. To me
All is dark apart from thee.
My life lost its whole of light,
When I bade thee, dear, good-night.

Good-night, Mother dear, good-night.
Soft thy slumbers be and light.
Though I call thee through the years,—
Call with passion of wild tears,—

May no dream of my unrest
Cross the quiet of thy breast ;
May no memory of me,
Agonized on earth for thee,
Come to grieve thee or affright.
Good-night, Mother dear, Good-night.

Good-night, oh my dearest. Sleep.
God hide from thee that I weep.
Sleep, sleep, Mother, while I wake
Life's long night through for thy sake,
Bound up heart and soul and brain
In a timeless stretch of pain,—
In a blank mid-night of sorrow
That has neither moon nor morrow.
God so wills. It must be right.
Thine the Slumber, mine, the Night.



REMEM- BRANCE

It lies on our life
like the stars
on the sea,
Like the dew on
the face of
the flower,

Like the shade on the sun-
dazzled stretch of the
lea,

Like the snow on the storm-beaten
boughs of the tree,
Like the light on the wings of the
shower.

It comes as faith comes to the nun on
her knees,

As day dawns on the timorous sky.

It thrills through our souls as in summer the breeze

Falls over the slumbering green of the trees,
And stirs them to trembling reply.

From the sunset-hued realm of the shadowy Past,
Its wonderful flight it comes winging,
With odors of blossoms that drooped in the blast,
With starbeams that vanished when skies were o'er-
cast,
And music that hushed in the singing.

And scars of old sorrows, ghosts of dead pain
That left us all faint and weak hearted,
With droppings of tears that were once as hot rain,
These too doth it bring us, and bringing again,
Reveals that their sting is departed.

So it links the pale Past and the Present in one
With a ladder of vacillant light,
Along which, dim-footed and opal-robed, run
Hand in hand with To-day all the days that are
done,
Crowned each with its crown of delight.

Thus it gleams with a transient rainbow ray
Through the clouds of Earth's tempest-torn
places,
And does for us, living, what Death does one day,
When he stoops o'er us, dying, and kisses away
Life's woe from our wearyful faces.





A WIDE still valley, placid and deep,
Where shadows, dream-like, gather and
creep,
And the sunlight lies like a smile asleep.

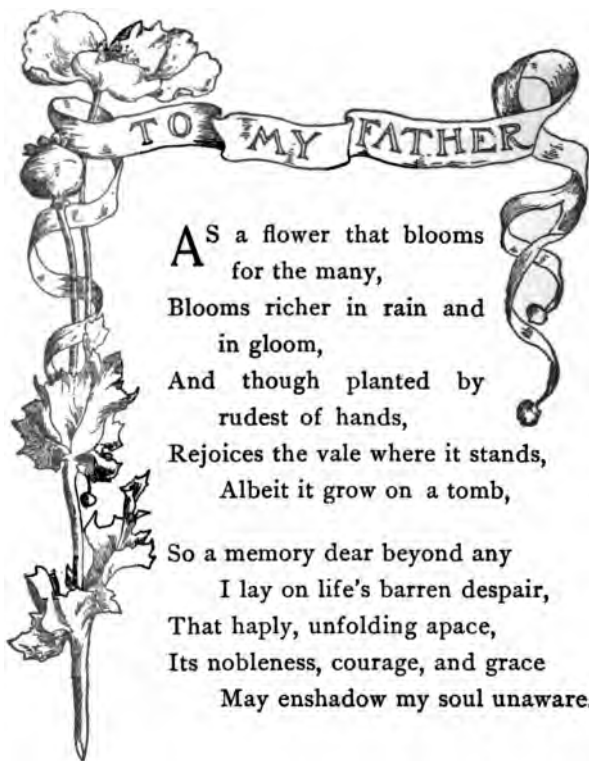
A gleaming mass of yellow wheat,
That runs through the green like a golden street,
Trodden all day by light butterflies' feet.

A silver stretch of quivering corn,
That stands adroop in the sheeny morn
Like hearts with secrets too great to be borne.

Far glimpses of flowers ; tangles of fern ;
Dim dazzles of dew-drops that shiver and burn ;
Wild brooks, like bright fancies that turn and
return.

Wide over the whole a suggestion of peace,
As of life and of beauty too perfect to cease,
Like the glamour lent by the Golden Fleece.





AS a flower that blooms
for the many,
Blooms richer in rain and
in gloom,
And though planted by
rudest of hands,
Rejoices the vale where it stands,
Albeit it grow on a tomb,
So a memory dear beyond any
I lay on life's barren despair,
That haply, unfolding apace,
Its nobleness, courage, and grace
May enshadow my soul unaware.



WITH a forehead serene and the gait of a
queen

She is threading life's sorrowful maze.
Of her blessed evangel is none other sign
Than that lift of her head, and a courage divine
In the exquisite calm of her gaze.

But to walk where she leads is to hold by high
creeds ;

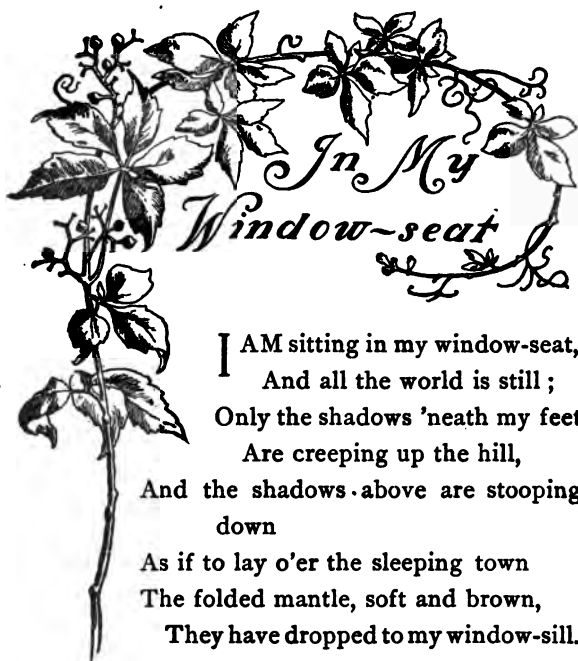
To feel stirrings of wings in the soul ;
To make spurs of one's fetters and moons of mid-
nights ;

Of dim deserts make Pisgahs,—of falls eagle-
flights

That shall sweep at one stretch to the goal.

And remembering her is afar to recur
 To vows made by her side unafraid ;
To grow strong with her strength ; to be girt with
 her grace,
And to pattern one's soul by the look in her face,
 To receive Truth's supreme accolade.





*In My
Window-seat*

I AM sitting in my window-seat,
And all the world is still ;
Only the shadows 'neath my feet
Are creeping up the hill,
And the shadows above are stooping
down
As if to lay o'er the sleeping town
The folded mantle, soft and brown,
They have dropped to my window-sill.

More dim, more dense the twilight grows ;
A silence falls on Earth
As if it waited for the throes
Of some immortal birth.

The stars throb out with fitful light,
Like a golden pulse in the veins of night,
And across the heavens thin and white,
Stretches the silver girth.

Then out upon the quivering dark—
The palpitating sky—
Athwart the gloom that seems to hark
A decree that bids it die,
Dropped from a hand beyond our sight
There falls the glittering long moonlight,
Like a sword down-flashing through the night
That it severs in passing by.

And as if wakened at the touch
To tremulous delight,
Yet tinged with earthliness overmuch,
Come the voices of the night.
Now sad as notes of mortals are,
Now sweet, mysterious and far
As from seraphs poised on a distant star,
But winged for nearer flight.

My soul, borne upward with the sweep
Of the solemn exultant lay,
Borne on by the music grave and deep
Is lost in the pathless grey.
Around me are living thoughts astir.
Above Truths interlace and blur.
Beneath lie shadows of things that were,
And dreams dreamed through by day.

And as I watch, lo, over all,
O'er sea, and hill, and wood,
A wondrous presence seems to fall
Out of the clouds that brood,—
Something immeasurably grand,
As if the shadow of God's hand
An instant lay across the land,
And near us Angels stood.

And a holy murmur fills the air—
A strange delicious thrill—

As if men's hearts awoke in prayer
To listen to God's will,
And, listening, heard a summons sweet
Beyond compare, and ceased to beat.
And I sit alone in my window-seat,
And the world is very still.





